

## Opelika Middle Schools Keith York Named Alabama's Middle School Principal of the Year



*Mayor Fuller, Keith York and Dr. Mark Neighbors*

Mayor Fuller and the City Council recognizes Keith York at the May 16 City Council meeting. Keith York, principal of Opelika Middle School in the Opelika City School System, has been named 2017-2018 Alabama Middle School Principal of the Year by the Alabama Association of Secondary School Principals (AASSP).

York has 25 years of experience in the field of education with 16 of those years in administration. Since 2011, York has led Opelika Middle School as its principal. Previously, he served as an assistant principal at Opelika Middle School.

Principal York works collaboratively with all stakeholders to determine programs and procedures that will be most effective in the classroom.

Through his efforts, Opelika Middle School implemented the **Be Nice** initiative to develop positive character and behavior among students. Through advisory periods, all staff members are assigned to small groups of students and use this time to discuss positive character, build rapport and guide students' academic needs. This initiative has created a culture of respect and tolerance along with a safe learning environment, thus leading to the 2016-2017 Alabama Safe School Award.

Also a Skills/Enrichment period was created to ensure students are provided instructional opportunities to be successful. This unique learning opportunity involves every teacher on staff and provides reading and math enrichment as well as mini project-based learning groups. This program has fostered students' growth of 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning skills and resulted in yearly increased proficiency results on the ACT Aspire.

We are so very proud of York for all he does for our students. He's making a difference and we appreciate it!